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## CLAIMS

1. A composition in the form of a dry powder and which comprises:
- 5 a) at least one membrane lipid, and  
b) at least one biologically active compound that is a carboxylic acid,  
and which forms structured lipid assemblies when dispersed/dissolved in an aqueous medium.
- 10 2. A composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said membrane lipid comprises a phospholipid or mixture of phospholipids.
3. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
15 wherein said biologically active compound comprises an  $\alpha$ -hydroxycarboxylic acid, a  $\beta$ -hydroxycarboxylic acid and/or an  $\alpha$ -ketocarboxylic acid.
4. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
20 wherein said biologically active compound is salicylate or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.
5. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
which also contains a xanthine as a biologically active compound.
- 25 6. A composition as claimed in claim 5, wherein the xanthine is caffeine.
7. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
30 wherein the proportion of said membrane lipid to said biologically active compound is from 1:20 to 20:1 by weight.

AMENDED SHEET

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8. A method of preparing a composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, which comprises either mixing or milling together the components to produce a homogeneous dry powder, or
- 5 dispersing/dissolving the components, either sequentially or simultaneously, in a solvent, subsequently removing the said solvent so as to form a solid mixture and then pulverising the said solid mixture to produce a homogeneous dry powder.
- 10 9. A dispersion of structured lipid assemblies suspended in a solution of at least one biologically active compound which comprises a carboxylic acid and that is suitable for use in preparations for topical administration.
- 15 10. A method of preparing a dispersion of structured lipid assemblies as claimed in claim 9, which comprises dispersing/dissolving a dry powder composition as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, or the components of such a composition, with the said components being dispersed or dissolved either sequentially or simultaneously, in an aqueous
- 20 medium.
11. A dispersion as claimed in claim 9 or as prepared by the method of claim 10, and which is in the form of a cream, gel or lotion formulated for topical administration.

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